

NEWS RELEASE

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Utah Department of Community and Culture

Lieutenant Governor Announces
New CERT Coordinator

Salt Lake City, Utah – Lieutenant Governor Gary R. Herbert announced the appointment of Dr. Stephen P. Rundquist as the new State CERT Coordinator for the Community Emergency Response Team Program at the February 16th Board meeting of the Utah Commission on Volunteers (COV). Rundquist will assume responsibility beginning March 6, 2006, promoting and maintaining the CERT program as the primary Community Preparedness Program for the state of Utah.

Since 1994, nearly 60,000 Utahns have been trained in basic disaster response skills through the CERT program under the direction of the Utah Department of Public Safety. In January 2006, the CERT program moved to the Commission on Volunteers, an office of the Lieutenant Governor. “We feel extremely honored that Dr. Rundquist would agree to take over the responsibilities of CERT for the State of Utah,” said Lieutenant Governor Herbert. “He is, after all, the man who brought CERT to Utah in the first place and is the most qualified to lead the CERT program now.”

Dr. Rundquist knows exactly what he has signed up for. In 1993 he participated in FEMA’s first CERT Train-the-Trainer course at the National Emergency Training Center and in 1994 established a pilot program with West Valley City to present the first CERT training course. In 1994, Rundquist also created a State CERT Advisory Board to develop program guidance and procedures ensuring program integrity statewide. Between 1994 and 2000, Rundquist established the CERT program as the centerpiece of Utah’s Community Disaster Preparedness, training over 12,000 citizens and making Utah one of the first states in the nation to embrace the CERT Program and the first in the nation to establish state level leadership, guidance and Train-the-Trainer courses.

Rundquist has been with the Utah Office of Emergency Services, Division of Homeland Security for sixteen years, the last five of which as the Community Support Specialist and Liaison Officer assigned to the counties in Southwest Utah. In that position he was instrumental in organizing the nation’s first two Regional Citizen Corps Councils, in answer to the President’s Call to Service, following 9-11. Hyde states, “Dr. Rundquist undeniably has the qualifications, knowledge and skills to make Utah’s CERT Program number one in the nation, but more importantly, he understands that CERT is about readiness, people helping people, and doing the greatest good for the greatest number.”